GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4957
ANSWERED ON:19.04.2001
CROP DIVERSIFICATION
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the experts have suggested crop diversification plan in view of the declining agricultural productivity due to prolonged wheat-rice rotation, soil degradation;

(b) if so, whether the Government have considered the crop diversification plan;

(c) if so, the details of the features of crop diversification plan;

(d) whether the farmers are not in favour of this plan;

(e) if so, their apprehensions in this regard; and

(f) the corrective steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SRIPAD Y. NAIK)

(a) to (c): Crop diversification is intended to give a wider choice in production of variety of crops in a given area so as to expand production related activities on various crops and also to lessen risk. The crop diversification in India is generally viewed as a shift from traditionally grown less remunerative crop(s) to more remunerative crop(s). Package of practices evolved through research system of Indian Council of Agricultural Research as well as State AgriculturalUniversities make recommendations for adoption by the farmers keeping in view the agricultural productivity, soil health and management of natural resources. However, cost and economic return is governing the crop diversification.

(d) & (e): The alternate crops for wheat and rice include potato, sugarcane, sunflower, mustard, soyabean, maize, pulses, vegetables, fodder crop and several promising horticultural crops. However, risk free production and assured market of rice and wheat supported with remunerative prices attract the farmers for cultivation of these crops. In adoption of other crops under diversification farmers apprehend risk in production, marketing and prices.

(f): Department of Agriculture & Cooperation is implementing various Central Sector andCentrally Sponsored Schemes for increasing the production and productivity of crops. From 4th October, 2000, 27 Centrally Sponsored Schemes have been subsumed with Macro Management Mode of Agriculture and States have been given funds to implement theseschemes. Thus States will have flexibility in choosing the schemes most suited to their agro- climatic conditions and also to meet the demand of farmers.